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Editorial

THE AMERICAN CLASSICAL LEAGUE AFTER FIVE YEARS 1917-1922

In June, 1917, just after the United States entered the World War, the first National Classical Conference was held at Princeton. In July, 1918, at the crisis of the war, the National Classical Conference was held in Pittsburgh. In July, 1919, the American Classical League was organized in Milwaukee. Then came its first annual meeting in Cincinnati in June, 1920, followed by the second annual meeting in Philadelphia in July, 1921, when Vice-President Coolidge delivered his famous address and when the Classical Investigation was launched with the financial help of the General Education Board. Last of all was the annual meeting held in Boston in July, at the close of a year of vigorous activities and most encouraging progress. The papers read at the Boston meeting, including the special statement of Hon. Charles Evans Hughes, Secretary of State, read at the general session of the National Education Association on the Fourth of July, are printed elsewhere in this issue. Read them all. They are well worth it. Professor Oldfather gave a clear account of the present critical situation of the invaluable *Thesaurus*, and Professor Kent made plain the real meaning of Latin as the auxiliary international language. Then followed three papers on Classics in the Secondary Schools. Professor Inglis of Harvard read a friendly and searching critique of our methods of teaching and how to improve them. Commissioner Payson Smith of Massachusetts

and State Superintendent Finegan of Pennsylvania came out flat-footed for maintaining and strengthening the Classics in the schools.

Dean West's annual report as President of the American Classical League was full of encouraging facts. The Classical Investigation has already made great progress through the indefatigable labors of the three special investigators, W. L. Carr, Mason D. Gray, and W. V. McDuffee. It was reported that two thousand classical teachers are giving time and labor to it voluntarily and without any compensation. But the full figures are better yet, for about three thousand classical teachers and nearly one thousand teachers of English, French, and history is the true total. It is a free-will offering unmatched in the history of American education. Moreover the impartiality and thoroughness of the whole investigation are winning the approval of educators generally. We are criticizing and searching our methods in order to improve them. No other subject has ever been so severely studied by its own advocates as our classical teaching is now being studied. It is producing a feeling of confidence. It is raising the insistent question as to why the same should not be done for all subjects. Then think of the area of our experimentation! It extends to every state in the Union. It includes nearly 110,000 pupils in 716 secondary schools. In another year this part of our work will be extended.

There are other encouraging omens. The Carnegie Corporation has appropriated \$30,000 for the general work of the American Classical League. It is an immense help at this juncture. Our membership has increased heavily during the year and the sale of our publications has also increased. Influential friends have spoken out in behalf of our cause. So far as returns are available, the enrollment of pupils, while showing only slight gains in Greek, shows a strong advance in Latin.

The movement to improve our teaching is gaining force and bids fair to put our whole secondary school work in Classics on a stronger basis soon. It has been a good year. Next year promises to be still better.